

REMARKS

This Amendment, submitted in response to the Office Action dated September 27, 2004, is believed to be fully responsive to each point of rejection raised therein. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration on the merits is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-33 are now pending in the present application.

I. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-18 and 21-25 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Ohkubo et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,910,972).

Claims 1 and 8

Claim 1 recites a method for “displaying two or more images of an identical object to be compared, wherein the two or more images are displayed together in a row or column with positions of *a structural feature area* of the identical object in the two or more images aligned horizontally or vertically.” The Examiner cites signals S1 and S2 of Fig. 22 and col. 25, lines 38 to col. 26, line 59 for teaching the elements of claim 1.

In Ohkubo, the image signals S1 and S2 are position matched according to marker patterns D in the images. The image processing means carries out the position matching process on the first X-ray image signal and the second X-ray image signal in accordance with the calculated position matching information. See col. 26, lines 24-45.

However, there is no indication that a structural feature area of the identical object in the two or more images, are aligned horizontally or vertically. In particular, upon viewing Fig. 22, the marker patterns D are not a structural feature area of the object, but are outside of any structural feature areas of the object. Consequently, basing the position matching on the position of marker patterns D, would not resolve the problems associated with changes in the position or posture of the object which is addressed by the exemplary embodiment of the invention, as recited in claim 1. See specification at page 2.

Further, the marker D disclosed in Ohkubo is utilized for positioning two images before obtaining a difference picture. Therefore, Ohkubo discloses piling the images for obtaining the difference picture. However, Ohkubo does not disclose displaying two images side-by-side. Ohkubo does not disclose that “the two or more images displayed together in a row or a column with positions of a structural feature area of the identical object in the two or more images aligned horizontally or vertically,” as recited in claim 1.

For at least these reasons, claim 1 and its dependent claims should be deemed patentable. Since claim 8 recites similar elements, claim 8 and its dependent claims should be deemed patentable for the same reasons.

Claims 7 and 14

Claims 7 and 14 describe that each of the two or more images is added onto an image display one by one. The Examiner cites Fig. 8 for teaching the aspects of claim 7 and 14. However, in Fig. 8, two images are added onto *separate* image displays. There is no indication

in the Ohkubo reference that the two or more images are added onto *an image display* one by one.

The Examiner's rejection of claims 15, 22, and 23 are also deficient for at least this reason. Therefore, claims 7, 14, 15, 22 and 23 should be deemed allowable.

II. Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner has indicated that claims 19 and 20 contain allowable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. At the present time, Applicant has not rewritten claims 19 and 20 into independent form since Applicant believes claims 19 and 20 will be deemed allowable, without amendment, by virtue of their dependency to claim 1 for the reasons set forth above.

III. New claims

Applicant has added claims 26-33 to provide a more varied scope of protection. Claims 26-33 should be deemed allowable by virtue of their dependency to claims 1 and 8 for the reasons set forth above.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
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The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,


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